

**Extract from Executive Summary by Sandy Muirhead, Head of Environmental Services**

Sunbury Park is one of Spelthorne's most impressive parks. It has been extensively restored by the Council and local residents during the past two decades, and is very popular with both local residents and visitors to Spelthorne. The Park encompasses all of Orchard Meadow, the Walled Garden, the Sunbury Embroidery Gallery and Cafe; and the estate of the former manor house.

The Sunbury Ha-Ha is located in the grounds of the former estate. It is a locally-listed, historical feature that dates from approximately the same time period as the wall surrounding the Walled Garden (mid-17th century). Tree and scrub removal from the face of the Ha-Ha in 2006 revealed the Ha-Ha in its entirety, including a state of disrepair wrought by previous neglect, vegetation growth, and unsympathetic historical repairs.

Emergency works have started to repair the Ha-Ha. Removing the vegetation in 2006 has led to increased public access to the Ha-Ha, and it presented a clear danger to the public.

The wall was assessed to be dangerous, due to several severe structural faults. These included bulges and prominent deviations from plumb along various sections of the Ha-Ha. Vegetation growth has compromised the wall's structural integrity in at least three sections. Heavy pedestrian traffic at the western end of the Ha-Ha (where the footpath enters the woodland) had led to a major bulge (now repaired). During the course of dismantling this section in order for repairs to take place, part of the Ha-Ha collapsed because the outer face had separated from the inner wall. At least three sections of the Ha-Ha have collapsed during repairs to date. The site has been fenced to include the public. Therefore the wall needs urgent work.

Advice was sought from SBC's conservation officer who advised that specialist contractors would be needed to effect repairs. Standard building contractors would not be suitable to repair this historical structure, as they would not have the skills or the knowledge to carry out a lasting repair that retained the historical characteristics of the wall.

**Financial and legal implications; and timetable for implementation**

The total cost of the project is £64,000. Environment Services and Direct Services have already contributed £9,000 towards this project from existing budgets; thus £55,000 remains to be funded from capital monies. Heritage Lottery Funding is not feasible within the timescales required and, due to its nature, the wall is not insured.

Because the Ha-Ha is located on Spelthorne Borough Council's property, the Council will be liable if anyone is injured or killed due to deficient and/or incomplete repairs.

Works are anticipated to last approximately 25 weeks, with 17 weeks of repairs being completed in the financial year 2007/2008, and an additional eight weeks of repairs in the financial year 2008/2009. This gap in the works is required due to the repairs having to be completed on a seasonal basis and due to contractor availability.